



NEWS RELEASE
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CONTACT: Gretchen Wright
202/371-1999

Gettysburg Afterschool Program Wins National Award From MetLife Foundation

Initiative is one of five nationwide recognized for innovation and excellence.

MetLife Foundation and the Afterschool Alliance today honored 21st Century PASOS, a Gettysburg, Pa.-based program, with an Afterschool Innovator Award. The award recognizes the program's success at providing multiple benefits for middle school students, particularly in the area of addressing middle school bullying. The program received the award at Gettysburg Middle School during a special event for *Lights On Afterschool*, the only nationwide rally for afterschool programs. 21st Century PASOS also received \$10,000 to sustain its work.

“The lessons young people learn in middle school stay with them for a lifetime,” said Dennis White, president and CEO of MetLife Foundation. “It is important to take advantage of this unique time in young people's development to provide them with the tools they will need to be successful in high school, college and life. MetLife Foundation is pleased to partner with the Afterschool Alliance to recognize afterschool programs that are doing an outstanding job of teaching life lessons and skills and helping young people achieve their potential.”

21st Century PASOS is one of only five afterschool programs nationwide to be named a 2011 MetLife Foundation Afterschool Innovator. It was highlighted in an [Issue Brief](#) released this month on how afterschool programs benefit middle school students – part of an Afterschool Alliance series that examines critical issues facing youth, schools and communities, and the role that the programs play in addressing these issues. Other award categories and Issue Brief topics this year include: providing middle school students with opportunities for service learning, supporting literacy for middle school students, and middle school strategies for aligning afterschool with the school day.

21st Century PASOS serves rural Adams County, Pa., and eligible participants are current or former Migrant Education students and English Language Learners – a mostly Latino population that is at risk of underperforming on state standardized reading and math assessments. The Bully Situation, a [website](#) and video series depicting real-life school bullying, was produced by a group of seventh- and eighth-graders in 21st Century PASOS. The project grew out of concern among teachers and students about bullying during school-day and afterschool hours. A school psychologist facilitated anti-bullying role-playing sessions for the students, and positive results led to further role-playing and skits that were the basis for the web videos. The students hope to expand the project by performing live skits in local schools and community locations, and they hope to produce additional videos for the website, as well as add an online anti-bullying chat, questions and answers, and Facebook connectivity.

“Our students have done a remarkable job creating an effective response to a critical issue,” said 21st Century PASOS Program Coordinator Christine Miller. “To have the MetLife Foundation

and the Afterschool Alliance recognize what the students have accomplished with the Bully Situation is an incredible source of honor for them. We are seeing better conduct and more compassion in our schools, and the Afterschool Innovator Award will enable that trend to continue.”

Organized by the Afterschool Alliance, *Lights On Afterschool* includes more than 7,500 events being held across the country on and around October 20, providing children, parents, community leaders, educators and others an opportunity to come together to urge Congress not to divert funds away from the afterschool programs that children and families need. Events will also give youth a chance to showcase the skills they learn and talents they develop at their afterschool programs and send the message that millions more kids need quality afterschool programs.

“Afterschool programs are a fundamental way to make sure that learning doesn’t stop when the school day ends,” said Afterschool Alliance Executive Director Jodi Grant. “These programs utilize countless creative ways to help children expand their horizons and get the support they need for educational success. The MetLife Foundation Afterschool Innovator Awards honor programs that stand out in helping kids excel.”

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The Afterschool Alliance is a nonprofit public awareness and advocacy organization working to ensure that all children and youth have access to quality afterschool programs. More information is available at www.afterschoolalliance.org.

MetLife Foundation was established in 1976 to carry on MetLife’s longstanding tradition of corporate contributions and community involvement. The Foundation is committed to building a secure future for individuals and communities worldwide. Through programs focusing on empowering older adults, preparing young people and building livable communities, MetLife Foundation increases access and opportunities for people of all ages. Since it was established, MetLife Foundation has made more than \$500 million in grants and \$75 million in program-related investments. For more information, visit www.metlife.org.